



The Paragraph

Georgia Association of Paralegals Quarterly Newsletter
Charter Member of the
National Federation of Paralegal Associations

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**GAP CELEBRATES
PARALEGAL DAY**

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By: Gina S. Farley, CP, President

"Individual commitment to a group effort — that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work." – Vince Lombardi



Have you ever known someone who always answers an invitation with "maybe"? They may not even realize that they are doing it because it becomes a habit. They have developed a pattern of avoiding commitment that leaves others feeling that their offer is being put on hold in case something better comes along.

On the other side of the spectrum, there are those who say "yes" to every invitation and sign up for everything when they are really thinking "unless something comes up". They do not avoid making a commitment, but their commitments are insincere.

Commitment is vital for the growth of any organization and this is certainly true for GAP. The success of our first Paralegal Day Event, the Diaper Drive for Genesis Shelter, and Service Juris Day is the result of the commitment that was made and kept by dedicated volunteers. Because of their sincere commitment, all GAP members can take a little more pride in belonging to the organization. However, the participants reap the most reward. The time they spent working and playing alongside fellow members has created camaraderie and connections that will pay off in many ways. You will notice these people at the dinner meetings and socials because they seem to know everyone!

GAP is planning great things in the coming months that will provide opportunities for you to renew a commitment to helping GAP grow and will provide added benefits to the membership. We are planning to create Membership Cards that can be presented for discounts on various services and products. We are planning to host the NFPA Region III meeting in November. We are still seeking volunteers for our Mentor Program. We are looking into creating "sections" by practice area to provide opportunities for members to more easily share knowledge applicable to their area of law. We are planning a Technology Conference for March 2007. We are also looking ahead to filling positions for next year's Board of Directors.

Many of these ideas came from the suggestions of members like you. This is your association and it is member driven; so if there is something you would like to see GAP offer, take the initiative to get it started. Contact a Board member, share your ideas and make a commitment to making it happen!

2006 GAP CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Anthony's Restaurant ** 3109 Piedmont Road ** 5:00 cocktails - 6:00 dinner

Aug. 8, 2006

GAP Membership Dinner at Anthony's

Speaker: Jim Wanserski, Corporate Fraud and Whistle Blowers

Sponsor: Discovery Support Services

Oct. 10, 2006
(5:00 – 6:00)

GAP Membership Dinner Meeting at Anthony's

New Member Mixer Sponsor: Andrew Grace Associates

Speaker: Robin Sangston, Cox Communications

Sponsor: The Lawstaff Group

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Dec. 5, 2006

9th Annual GAP Holiday Party at Anthony's

Installation of the 2007 Board of Directors

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SMART CONFERENCING



GAP LAYS THE GROUNDWORK FOR BOLTON ACADEMY

By: Alice Chow, Director of Communications

“You mean these aren’t assembly ready?!” exclaimed a volunteer upon first sight of the picnic table construction area.

After the initial realization of the colossal scope of work to be completed set in, Georgia Association of Paralegals (“GAP”) members showed what they were made of, and got to work, quite literally down and dirty, for the benefit of children in the Atlanta Public School System.

The 7th Annual Service Juris day, a community service event wherein



Atlanta’s legal services providers join forces with volunteer opportunity clearinghouse Hands on Atlanta, took place on Saturday, June 24, at Bolton Academy in northwest Atlanta.

Approximately 35 GAP members and helpers, and hundreds of members of the city’s legal community, contributed their labor. GAP volunteers completely built two picnic tables, starting with lumber and ending with sturdy, attractive outdoor furniture. This involved sawing, sanding, drilling, assembling, transporting, staining and sealing the tables. They also made way for several large container gardens by clearing an area previously teeming with poison ivy. Other GAP members worked diligently on mulching, digging, planting, watering and other landscaping tasks.



Service Juris was hard work, but most definitely “a success”, according to Adam Dean, GAP’s Community Service Coordinator.

When the 2006-2007 academic year begins this August, Bolton Academy students will find it easier to build social and physical skills, and character. The beautified

campus will also instill in them a sense pride. “Service Juris ... will be leaving a legacy that will serve the students and community of Bolton Academy for years to come,” proclaimed Dr. Marilyn S. Taylor, Principal of Bolton Academy.

Thanks again to all volunteers who made GAP proud and enhanced the community’s image of those in the legal profession.



Visit <http://www.gaparalegal.org/communityservice.html> for information on upcoming GAP community service events.

GAP ATTENDS THE 32ND ANNUAL NFPA CONVENTION

By: Christina Weeks, RP, Vice President & NFPA Primary



The National Federation of Paralegal Associations (“NFPA”) held its 32nd annual convention May 4 – 8, 2006 in Chicago, IL, which was themed “Lose Your Blues”. Each association was encouraged to send at least one delegate (voting representative) to the convention. GAP sent two delegates, Christina Weeks, Primary, and Kevin Fogle, Secondary. Gina Farley, President, and other members of GAP attended the convention as observers.

There were three main components of the convention. There was a day of optional CLE seminars, a day of region meetings and workshops and one and a half days of policy meetings. Additionally, new officers were elected, and luncheons, evening social events and special presentations were also held.

GAP is a member of Region III. The other associations in our region are: Cleveland Association of Paralegals, Greater Lexington

Paralegal Association, Indiana Paralegal Association, Memphis Paralegal Association, Michiana Paralegal Association, Middle Tennessee Paralegal Association, Northeast Indiana Paralegal Association, Palmetto Paralegal Association, Tampa Bay Paralegal Association



Our region meetings present the opportunity to gather with the members of the associations in our geographic area and discuss the issues and events that are interesting and important to our region. In our region meeting at the convention, we discussed logistics, procedures, ideas and concerns. Many of our region’s new delegates were not familiar with how a NFPA convention works, how NFPA is run or when it is appropriate to contact NFPA leaders. This gathering of experienced and inexperienced members allows us to mentor and guide each other. We also discussed fundraising and marketing strategies that are being successfully used in our region.

Because NFPA voted last year to change the annual convention to the fall rather than the spring, we are not having another convention until the fall of 2007 (to be held in Tampa, FL). Based on this decision, we would not have a region meeting again until the spring of 2007. However, we decided that would be too long to wait to get together again. Therefore, GAP volunteered to host a region meeting in November 2006. The meeting

will be held the first weekend in November, and all NFPA members are welcome to attend. Please check our website for updated details as they become available.



The Saturday of the convention was the start of the policy meeting. In the policy meeting we brought proposed agenda topics to the floor and discussed their merits. Once we exhausted all opposition to voting, a roll call vote was taken on any agenda topic that proposed a change to the by-laws or policies that are currently held by NFPA.

As you may recall, the NFPA Primary, Christina Weeks, sent out an email survey before the convention. The survey asked for your vote and comments

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WELCOME NEW GAP MEMBERS!

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BOARD ANNOUNCEMENT

By: Christina Weeks, RP, Vice President & NFPA Primary

In the near future, you will receive notice that Statement of Interest forms are available for the 2007 Board of Directors. The Statement of Interest notice is GAP's invitation to all members to apply for coordinator, director and officer positions on the board. If you are interested in holding a board position, you should review the criteria and responsibilities on the website. Current board members are required to submit a Statement of Interest if they would like to remain on the board in 2007; the positions are not automatically renewed. However, due to the knowledge-base and experience that is required for certain board positions, there is a succession plan in place for the President (typically filled by the former Vice President) and NFPA Primary (typically filled by the former Secondary who trained under the Primary the previous year) and those persons will be given preference for holding those positions in the coming year. Don't forget that you can always volunteer as a committee member; go to the volunteer section of our website or contact the director of your area of interest.

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THE NAVY LEGALMEN AND MILITARY PARALEGAL PROJECT

By: Linda Bryans, Member

If you've been looking for a way to show your support and thank our military personnel serving in Afghanistan and Iraq, you'll be pleased to learn of GAP's long-term community service project, the Navy Legalmen and Military Paralegal Project. Navy Legalmen and Military Paralegals, which include both men and women, are the military's equivalent to civilian paralegals.

The idea for the Legalmen Project was developed during last year's National Federation of Paralegal Associations' ("NFPA") 2005 Leadership Conference in Washington, DC. At the conference, Lori Thomson, Pro Bono Coordinator for NFPA, discussed with Steve Distefano, President of the Navy Legalmen Association, ways in which civilian paralegals could lend support to military paralegals. Following their discussion, Lori created the Legalmen Project. (For more information, see "Pro Bono – Paralegals Making a Difference," April/May 2006 Ed. of the National Paralegal Reporter.)

To date, 23 local paralegal associations, including GAP, are participating in the Legalmen Project by sending care packages every other month to "adopted" Navy Legalmen and Military Paralegals. In addition to the care packages, members of associations are encouraged to send letters and cards during the months when packages are not prepared.

This community service project is a long-term commitment being continued by NFPA until all Legalmen have returned to the United States. As a result of the generous donations received to date, GAP has prepared and sent two care packages to Legalmen stationed at the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad, Iraq. Also, letters were written by students from Branch Christian Community School in Lawrenceville, Inman Middle School in Atlanta, Nicholson Elementary School in Marietta, and Dunwoody United Methodist Church School to those serving in Afghanistan and Iraq.

This project is completely member driven! If you would like to support the Legalmen Project, you may do so by writing cards and letters and/or making monetary donations used to purchase care package items and to cover shipping costs. Monetary donations should be forwarded directly to the Georgia Association of Paralegals, 1199 Euclid Ave., Atlanta, GA 30307. Please make your check payable to "Georgia Association of Paralegals" and write "Legalmen Pro Bono Project" on your check so the funds will be directed to this project. Cards and letters addressed to "Legalman" can also be sent to GAP.

If you have any questions about this project or have ideas that could benefit the program, please contact Adam Dean, GAP Community Service Coordinator, by phone at 404-589-1832 or via email to gagapervice@yahoo.com.



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DIAPER DRIVE!

By: Christina Weeks, RP, Vice President & NFPA Primary

Traditionally GAP has participated in numerous annual community service projects. This year, GAP is committed to increasing its contribution to our community; and has created a new board position of Community Service Coordinator. Adam Dean took the position a few months ago and has already increased GAP's commitment to our communities. Previously, GAP has been involved in a number of projects benefiting the Genesis Shelter ("Genesis"). In the summer of 2005 a supply drive was organized for Genesis, and this year the shelter's answer to the question "What do you need the most?" was "DIAPERS".

Genesis is "an emergency transitional community for homeless newborns and their families". Tracy Alladice, Volunteer Coordinator at Genesis, joined us at our June dinner meeting. GAP and its sponsors were able to present her with a truckload of diapers and over \$300.00 in donations.



The only requirements for residency at Genesis are being 18 years of age or older and having an infant. Families typically live at Genesis for about six months, but are allowed to stay for up to one year, if necessary. Genesis' focus is providing for the needs of all members of the families housed in the facility, which includes offering clothing and daily supplies..

The word "shelter" does not sufficiently describe the program at Genesis - the families there are not only given a place to live and sustenance, but they are given so much more, such as assistance in recovering from domestic violence, help with securing employment, job skills training, and assistance with finding affordable childcare and housing. The shelter exists solely to donations of time, money and supplies from caring members of the Atlanta communities. Genesis is always grateful and in need of monetary donation and supplies, but it is most needy and appreciate of people that volunteer their time and give continued support, thus ensuring the Genesis program's success for years to come. To volunteer or make a donation please contact Tracy Alladice at 404.522.6056; also see <http://www.genesisshelter.com> for more information.

Announcement

Continuing Legal Education Opportunity for GAP Members

GAP members receive a **10% discount** off the registration price

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GAP ATTENDS NFPA CONVENTION

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on the agenda topics as presented prior to the convention. During the discussion of the agenda topics, there were many amendments. Many of the agendas were adopted as resolutions, and you can review them as passed on the national section of our website at <http://www.gaparalegals.org/nfpa.html>.

The new NFPA board of directors was elected at the convention. An updated list of the members of the NFPA board is listed at www.paralegals.org at the bottom of the "Who we are" page. If you need the password to the member section of the NFPA website, please email me for further information at chrissy404@bellsouth.net.

Attending the convention is one of the best perks of being NFPA Primary. Since the NFPA Primary position is one that is principally responsible for communication with NFPA, it is essential for that person to attend the convention every year. Therefore, GAP pays for the NFPA Primary and NFPA Secondary to attend. If you have any interest in becoming more involved in GAP, please be sure to check the volunteer section of our webpage frequently and to read your e-news for committee openings and announcements.

Upcoming National Events

September 10, 2006 - National Paralegal Reporter Deadline

September 16-17, 2006 - PACE Ambassadors' Conference – Portland, Oregon

October 6-7, 2006 - NFPA National Leadership Conference – San Francisco, California

October 25, 2006 - National Paralegal Reporter Deadline

November 10, 2006 - National Paralegal Reporter Deadline

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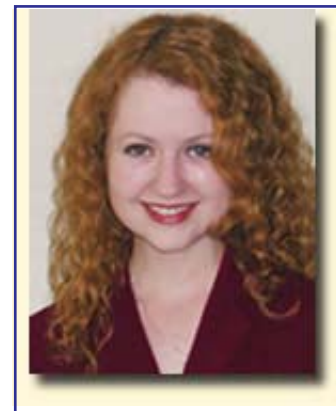
By: Karen V. Prouty, RP, PACE Ambassador and Charles Cromwell, Member

GAP members seeking a nationally recognized distinction can benefit from the best financial aid package since Georgia's HOPE scholarship program.

What the lottery-funded HOPE program gives to college students throughout the state, the Georgia Association of Paralegals 2006 PACE Scholarship offers GAP members desiring to become Registered Paralegals. And much of the credit goes to Alexander Gallo & Associates, Inc., one of the nation's leading full-service court reporting, video service and trial presentation companies.

GAP will award two PACE Scholarships this year to help members pass the Paralegal Advanced Competency Exam (PACE), administered by the National Federal of Paralegal Associations. Paralegals who pass PACE demonstrate an advanced level of experience, education and skill and are able to use the Registered Paralegal, or RP, designation. NFPA developed PACE with an eye toward setting standards for future regulation of the profession.

The GAP PACE Scholarships pay for the application fee, the exam fee, the PACE Study Manual and a stipend for the online sample exam or the PACE online review course. Those who pass PACE also receive an RP pin. Alexander Gallo likens the RP designation for paralegals to its commitment to combine service and technology in producing advanced litigation support products.



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ALEXANDER GALLO SPONSORS PACE SCHOLARSHIPS

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The Georgia Association of Paralegals and Alexander Gallo & Associates encourage all GAP members who meet or soon will meet the education and experience criteria to apply for the scholarships. Eligibility includes being a current member of GAP, agreeing to continue your membership as a Voting Member in 2007 and to take PACE by October 31, 2007. The application form is located on the GAP Web site at www.gaparalegal.org under the PACE link or available from the PACE Ambassador, Karen V. Prouty, RP, kprouty@fjl-law.com, 404-586-2039. Scholarship candidates also must submit an essay of 300 words on the topic "How Being a PACE Registered Paralegal Benefits GAP, the National Federation of Paralegal Associations (NFPA) and the Paralegal Profession."

More information on the PACE work experience and educational eligibility requirements is available on the NFPA Web site at www.paralegals.org.

Applications are due by October 2, 2006. E-mail, fax or mail your application to GAP headquarters (gaparalegal@mindspring.com; 404-522-0132; 1199 Euclid Avenue, NE, Atlanta, GA 30307-1509). The PACE Scholarship Committee — to be comprised of two Registered Paralegals who do not sit on GAP's Board and a representative of Alexander Gallo & Associates — will review the applications and choose the recipients for the scholarships. The recipients will be announced at GAP's annual Holiday Party on December 5, 2006. If you are chosen as one of the recipients, your dinner will be included in the scholarship package.

Thanks to Alexander Gallo & Associates for its commitment to the Georgia Association of Paralegals and the paralegal profession in funding this year's scholarships. Let's show our appreciation for Alexander Gallo & Associates support by applying for the scholarship today.

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